

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TUNIS 00735 071614Z

43

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 IO-14 AID-20 DRC-01 /157 W

----- 092934

R 071540Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4415

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE TUNIS 735

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, TS, LY

SUBJECT: NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEBATE ON TUNISIAN-LIBYAN
MERGER ENDS WITH CLEAR NOUIRA VICTORY

REF: TUNIS 710

1. NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEBATE RE TUNISIAN-LIBYAN MERGER
CONCLUDED MORNING FEB 5 WITH SPEECH BY PRIME MINISTER
NOUIRA EXPRESSING HIS PLEASURE WITH COLLECTIVE REMARKS
OF DEPUTIES, WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS REFLECTING POPULAR
OPINION. SECMD DAY SPEECHES EVEN MORE CRITICAL OF
LIBYA AND QADHAFI'S INTENTIONA IN UNION THAN ON FIRST
DAY, NOTABLY SPEECH BY BOURGUIBA CONFIDANT BECHIR ZARG AL
AYOUN. NOUIRA ALSO CHARACTERIZED JERBA PROCLAMATION AS
POLICAL EVENT AND STRESSED THAT PROCLAMATION OF A
PRINCIPLE CANNOT BE CONSIDERED INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT,
OR EVEN LESS, INTERNATIONAL TREATYM AMONG OTHER THINGS,
PRIME MINISTER SAID THERE WAS "FULL AGREEMENT" ON NECESSITY
PRESERVE TUNITWAN ENTITY.

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PAGE 02 TUNIS 00735 071614Z

2. FOLLOWING NOUIRA'S SPEECH, ASSEMBLY UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED
SENDING PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT TO SPECIAL
COMMISSION FOR FURTHER STUDY. NEW FIFTEEN MAN COMMISSION
WAS SELECTED, TO BE PRESIDED OVER BY VICE PRESIDENT
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.

3. COMMENT: NOUIRA CLEARLY PLEASED THAT HIS POLICY OF
GRADUALISM AND CAUTION IN APPROACHING UNION WAS ENDORSED
BY NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. THERE IS SOME SPECULATION, HOWEVER,
AS TO HOW PRESIDENTS BOUBOURGIBA AND QADHAFI WILL REACT TO
TWO-DAY DEBATE. BOURGUIBA COULD BE MIFFED AT INDIRECT
CRITICISM OF HIS ROLE IN CONNECTION JERBA PROCLAMATION,
WHILE QADHAFI WILL HARDLY BE PLEASED WITH DEPUTIES'
DISPARAGING REMARKS ABOUT HIM.

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